

Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago
1306 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605
Department Phone: 312-369-8300, Department Fax number: 312-369-8036
www.colum.edu/dance_center/

Contact Improvisation

Course Number: 33-1281-02

Credits: 1

Class Meeting Time: Mondays & Wednesdays, 6:00-7:20 pm

Studio: Rm. 300 at the Dance Center

Faculty: Daniel Halkin

Office Hours: By appointment only

Office Location: PT Faculty office, 3rd floor of Dance Center

Contact Phone Number: 847-971-2465

Email address: dhalkin@earthlink.net

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS AND MATERIALS

1. Please go to www.chicagocontactimprov.com and click on the "Resources for Students of Contact Improvisation" link. Karl Frost's "Fundamentals of Contact Improvisation" is an excellent resource.

RATIONALE

This course is a dance class that accommodates all levels of movement experience. For beginning dancers this course is an introduction to movement principles and practices in a safe and encouraging environment. For experienced dancers this class deepens and broadens technical training including work that builds strength, endurance, coordination, artistry and self direction. This class is required by the Dance Center as a part of your dance major study and technical training. This course satisfies 1 credit towards your major.

DESCRIPTION

In this course you will be guided in developing physical and perceptual skills such as: falling, rolling, working with disorientation, giving and supporting weight with a partner, moving comfortably in and out of the floor. You will often work in duets, dancing with your classmates in a variety of situations. You will also work on solo improvising and dancing in groups. The course employs focused warm-ups designed to cultivate various physical states and movement qualities, technical skill development, and extended periods of dancing where you will practice integration of course material into the broader context of improvising.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this semester, you will be able to:

1. maintain safety during a contact improvisation dance (your own safety as well as that of those who are around you)
2. fall safely using multiple pathways
3. maintain awareness beyond those dancers you are in contact with
4. move in and out of contact with ease
5. demonstrate rolling point of contact
6. demonstrate counterbalance
7. provide weight support/receive weight support
8. move into and out of the floor in contact with a partner
9. modulate the physical tone of your body in relationship to the changing needs of the dance/your partners

10. demonstrate a wide range of touch dynamics (including light touch, brushing, sliding, leaning, compression, and the continuum of weighted touch)
11. offer and recognize invitations (i.e. physical situations created by a dancer to engage another dancer in a physical interaction)
12. participate in a contact improvisation trio, quartet, or quintet
13. participate in open improvisational forms (i.e. open dancing, round robins)
14. improvise a solo with the context of a group
15. demonstrate lofting and perching
16. explore states of disorientation and being upside down
17. state your opinions on the pros and cons of intimacy and sexuality in the practice of contact improvisation

GRADING POLICY AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

REQUIREMENTS

In Class

This class is based on our work in the studio. The studio is our place to **research, practice, perform, witness, and discuss** contact improvisation. Your participation and investment in this process is vital and required.

I will be evaluating you on your

- Committed physical participation in studio activities. This means that you are regularly willing to push the range of your physicality.
- Supportive and engaged work with everyone in the class.
- Active participation in discussion and feedback sessions.
- Progress toward course objectives throughout the semester.

Writing

There are three required essays of 1-2 pages in length: two based on assigned readings, and one based on the required jam (see Jam Attendance below). There will also be brief written communications involving 1-2 sentence answers to questions. If possible, all writings should be submitted as e-mails.

Jam Attendance

You are required to attend at least one improvisation jam during the semester, and to write a 1-2 page essay about an experience you had there. If you cannot attend one of the jams happening at The Dance Center, you can attend one of the regular jams at Links Hall, 3435 North Sheffield, Sundays 11:30am-2:00pm (call ahead to confirm that there is a jam the Sunday you plan to attend: 847-971-2465.)

Failure to attend a jam will drop your grade by one full letter!

In Class.....85%
 Writing.....15%

EVALUATION

Grading Scale

A = 94% to 100%	C+ = 78% to 80%
A- = 91% to 93%	C = 74% to 77%
B+ = 88% to 90%	C- = 71% to 73%
B = 84% to 87%	D = 61% to 70%

B- = 81% to 83%	F = 0 to 60%
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Below are some explanations which may help you understand the expectations for this course.

Excellence/the A Grade: *Excellence* is for students who show hunger to know, a passion for learning, a consistent willingness to take risks and to integrate corrections. Excellence means striving for the best at all times and demonstrating exceptional growth towards the objectives of this course. An excellent student contributes substantially to a positive, active, learning environment through thoughtful participation in discussions and enthusiastic involvement in class activities. By the end of the semester, an A student is working at a substantially higher level than when the semester began.

Good/the B Grade: *Good* is for students who do their work with uniform solidity. They contribute to a positive, active, learning environment through thoughtful participation in discussions and involvement in class activities. Showing dedication, a willingness to take new steps, concentration and consistent work habits, a B student demonstrates increased accomplishment of skills during the semester. The B student is solid beyond reproach.

Average/the C Grade: *Average* is for students who do their work and actively participate in class, but lack the energy or will to demonstrate real interest in the material or substantial growth. The C student is inconsistent in terms of the quality of his/her attention and work. Having accomplished some skills during the semester, both the student and the teacher know that it could be better. A C student can accomplish more.

Poor/the D Grade: *Poor* is for students who have a difficult time demonstrating engagement in the class. Lacking the necessary determination and willingness to engage in new experiences, the D student shows very little improvement. Inconsistent quality of participation demonstrates minimal growth towards the objectives of the course.

Failing/the F Grade: *Failing* is for students who have not completed assignments, have missed so many classes, have been late or left classes early so often, that there is no base for which to grade. Try again next semester!

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is mandatory. Each class adds to the accumulation of principles and experiences that allow the group to work safely with increasing risk and skill. Please read carefully: **every third absence will lower the student's earned grade one full letter (A- to B-, C to D, etc.). A grade will be lowered a partial step (B to B-, B- to C+, etc.) for absences in between every third absence.** The Dance Center does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences as we assume all absences are legitimate. Excessive absences for any reason, even illness or crisis, will lower your grade. **When injury, extended illness or other crisis cause a student to miss class it is the student's responsibility to approach the instructor as soon as possible to discuss their status in the course and possible remedies.**

LATENESS

You are expected to attend every class and to be dressed and ready to move on time. If you arrive late, the teacher will determine whether you can join class or can only observe class. Either way, twice the amount you are late will be deducted from your attendance for that day. If you are 5 minutes late, you will only be counted as having attended 70 minutes on that day.

MAKE-UP

You may make up **ONE** class by participating in an extra improvisation jam, and writing a 1-2 page essay on an experience you had there.

SAFETY

This class involves physical partnering which **requires that each student be aware of and responsible for their own safety at all times.** The quality of your physical and mental attention will create the foundation for the class. We will work with disorientation and extended dancing. If you need to rest or to sit out to process what is happening, please feel free to do so - there is much to be learned by active watching. You must check with the teacher before rejoining the group.

Because this class involves physical contact you must cover any cuts with a sturdy bandage and clothing. If you get an abrasion or floor burn during class, stop what you are doing, clean and dress the injury before you continue dancing. Please let me know of any injuries that you have.

HYGIENE AND ATTIRE

- Wear comfortable clothes that you can move in (i.e. sweat pants and t-shirts). Do not wear street clothes to class. No buckles, or clothing with zippers or other “scratchy” parts
- Wear layers that you can put on or take off during class
- You will dance in bare feet, but you may bring socks to warm up in
- Keep your hair out of your face
- Do not wear jewelry
- Cut your toenails and finger nails
- Practice good hygiene. Your classmates will thank you.

DEPARTMENT AND COLLEGE POLICIES

Midterm Evaluations

Near the middle of the semester you will receive notice of your current standing. Whether presented verbally or in written form, the instructor will indicate your grade to date. This will include a grade for Skill, a grade for Effort, and the number of Absences/Tardies. This is an important time to discuss with your teacher what you can do to improve by the end of the semester. You are encouraged to discuss your progress with your instructor throughout the semester whenever you have a question, problem or concern.

Incomplete Policy

Unless highly extenuating circumstances exist, the Dance Department does not grant incompletes. Should the student and teacher agree that an incomplete is necessary due to conditions, events or circumstances beyond their control, the following procedures must be followed: Before the end of the semester, the student and teacher must work out a **written** agreement that specifies, in terms of activity and products (i.e. papers, final projects, etc.), what will complete the unfulfilled course requirements and what the intermediate and final deadlines are for completion. This agreement must be signed by the student, the teacher, AND the department chair within one week of the semester ending. It is incumbent on the student and teacher to complete this work and present it to the chair for review and approval by the deadline specified.

The outside deadline for fulfilling incompletes is week 14 of the fall or spring semester after the incomplete is given. Exceptions to this will not be made. If no new grade is filed by the teacher, the incomplete will convert to an “F” at the end of the semester subsequent to the one for which the incomplete is given.

Academic Integrity:

Students at Columbia College Chicago enjoy significant freedom of artistic expression and are encouraged to stretch their scholarly and artistic boundaries. However, the College prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty. For present purposes, “academic dishonesty” is understood as the appropriation and representation of another’s work as one’s own, whether such appropriation includes all or part of the other’s work or whether it comprises all or part of what is represented as one’s own work (plagiarism). Appropriate citation avoids this form of dishonesty. In addition, “academic dishonesty” includes cheating in any form, the falsification of academic documents or the falsification of works or references for use in class or other academic circumstances. When such dishonesty is discovered, the consequences to the student can be severe. For further details see page 18 of the 2005-2007 College course catalogue.

Conaway Center Statement:

Students with disabilities are requested to present their Columbia accommodation letters to their instructor at the beginning of the semester so that accommodations can be arranged in a timely manner by the College, the department, or the faculty member, as appropriate. Students with disabilities who do not have accommodation letters should visit the office of Services for Students with Disabilities in room 520 of the Congress Building (312.369.8134/V or 312.369.8178/TTY). It is incumbent upon the students to know their responsibilities in this regard.